



STATE OF IOWA

TERRY E. BRANSTAD
GOVERNOR

KIM REYNOLDS
LT. GOVERNOR

OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL POLICY
STEVEN F. LUKAN, DIRECTOR

For Immediate Release
Tuesday, February 18, 2014

Contact:
Dale Woolery (515) 725-0310

Synthetic Drug Deaths Reported in Iowa: Education Still Key

DES MOINES – A new synthetic drug compound has been identified as being involved in three separate deaths of young Iowans, according to authorities. The Iowa Poison Control Center says the three deaths occurred in 2013, and were recently reported as involving the new synthetic cannabinoid known as 5F-PB-22.

“This tragic news demonstrates once again the degree to which these quick-changing products are unsafe, and the importance of educating our youth about their dangers,” said Steve Lukan, Director of the Governor’s Office of Drug Control Policy.

“Even though state and federal officials have strengthened laws to protect Iowans from dozens of different synthetic drug types, makers of these poisonous products keep skirting the law,” said Lukan. “For now the best defense against synthetic drugs is prevention, which means parents talking with children and other forms of education to help young Iowans make safe choices.”

One week ago, the DEA took emergency action to temporarily ban four new synthetic cannabinoids, including the 5F-PB-22 compound, at the federal level. The DEA is also expected to act soon to temporarily ban an additional ten new synthetic cathinones federally. The Board of Pharmacy is working with state officials to follow suit in Iowa.

“We will continue using all available means to protect Iowans from these elusive drugs and their dealers,” said Lukan. “The important message for young Iowans is that even though some new synthetic drug products may still be sold by a few stores, the contents of those packages can be very dangerous, and even deadly.”

For more information on what synthetic drugs look like, symptoms of their use, other warning signs, and how to get help, go to the Governor’s Office of Drug Control Policy website at <http://www.iowa.gov/odcp>.

###